



NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

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SMALL FIRMS TO GET TRADE TIPS AT MORE THAN 100 SBA EVENTS NATIONWIDE

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is holding more than 100 workshops and seminars across the nation to help small businesses learn about opportunities in the global marketplace. This unprecedented outreach comes as officials from more than 100 countries launch World Trade Organization (WTO) talks in Seattle that will shape international trade in the 21st century.

“Small businesses are leading the way when it comes to exporting,” said SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez. **“Ninety-seven percent of all U.S. exporters are small businesses and they account for almost a third of all U.S. export sales. The SBA is committed to helping this growth continue and that’s why we’re reaching out to America’s 24 million small businesses in cities and counties throughout the nation.”**

Administrator Alvarez is attending the WTO meeting and will use that forum to remind participants there of the pivotal role small businesses play with regard to trade.

Highlights of the agency’s national outreach effort include:

- In Salt Lake City, SBA Deputy Administrator Fred Hochberg will lead a tour today and later a roundtable discussion on trade at Cordin Cameras, which is one of the nation’s foremost manufacturers of high-speed cameras. The SBA assisted in the company’s development.
- In Milwaukee, small businesses currently involved with exporting will join tomorrow (Wed., Dec. 1) with state and trade association representatives brought together by the SBA to discuss world trade and the opportunities available.
- In Buffalo, the SBA will participate in ‘Western New York Exports’, an event to focus on the positive impact that exporting companies have on the local economy.
- In Alabama, the SBA and officials from the Alabama World Trade Association will promote trade awareness and education to state officials.

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- In Omaha, Neb., the SBA today will host a ‘Salute to Small Business Trade’ event attended by small business exporters, bankers, chamber of commerce members and economic development specialists. The SBA will provide an overview of its array of international trade and other resources available to those interested in going global.

A recent SBA report shows:

- Of the 209,000 U.S. businesses that export, more than 202,000 are small businesses.
- Between 1987 and 1997, the number of small business exporters tripled.
- The fastest growth has been among the ‘smallest of the small’ – businesses with fewer than 20 employees.

“With most of the world’s population and economic activity outside of our borders,” said Administrator Alvarez, **“America’s small businesses must fully participate in the international marketplace to enjoy sustained economic prosperity in the 21st century.”**

America’s Small Businesses and International Trade report is available on the SBA web site at <http://www.sba.gov/library/oitreport/>

For more information on this trade outreach, contact your local SBA district office. A telephone number can be obtained by calling toll free 1-800-U-ASK-SBA. For more information on the agency’s international trade services, visit the SBA’s web site at <http://www.sba.gov/oit/>

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